

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY CARACAS

S E C R E T STATE 182421

FOLLOWING REPEAT STATE 182421 ACTION PANAMA 01 AUG 75

QUOTE

S E C R E T STATE 182421

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS:PFOR, PN

SUBJECT: ANTI-TREATY FORCES SUFFER REVERSES IN SENATE

1. FOR THE SECOND TIME IN THE LAST FOUR DAYS, SENATOR HARRY BYRD, FACED WITH A TEST OF STRENGTH, BACKED OFF FROM OFFERING ANTI-TREATY PROVISIONS ON THE CANAL ISSUE. SENATE LEADERSHIP HAD DECIDED ON JULY 30TH TO POSTPONE VOTE ON BYRD AMENDMENT TO STATE APPROPRIATIONS BILL UNTIL AFTER THE AUGUST RECESS AFTER FILIBUSTER THREAT FROM BYRD THREATENED TO BOG DOWN A SENATE EAGER TO MEET ITS FRIDAY ADJOURNMENT DEADLINE.

2. SUBSEQUENTLY, BYRD THREATENED TO HOLD UP ON PROCEDURAL GROUNDS A KEY ADMINISTRATION SUPPORTED AMENDMENT ON TURKEY SCHEDULED FOR THURSDAY JULY 31ST. IN ORDER TO OBTAIN BYRD'S ACQUIESCENCE IN ALLOWING TURKEY AMENDMENT TO COME UP FOR FLOOR ACTION, LEADERSHIP ON WEDNESDAY NIGHT AGREED

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TO LET BYRD RAISE A SENSE OF THE CONGRESS RESOLUTION (WITH-

OUT GOING THROUGH NORMAL COMMITTEE CHANNELS; IN THIS CASE, THE SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE) FOLLOWING THE TURKEY VOTE ON THURSDAY. THE OPPOSITION HAD ONLY A DAY TO ORGANIZE ITSELF. BYRD AND FRIENDS PLAYED THEIR CARDS CLOSE, DISCLOSING ONLY LATE IN THE DAY THAT THEY WOULD SEEK SENATE RESOLUTION ON THE CANAL QUESTION TO THE EFFECT THAT THE UNITED STATES SHOULD MAINTAIN ITS SOVEREIGNTY, RIGHTS,

AND JURISDICTION IN THE PANAMA CANAL AND ZONE. BYRD ET AL HAD OPTED TO PURSUE THIS COURSE OF ACTION AFTER IT BECAME EVIDENT THAT EARLIER EFFORTS TO PASS A SNYDER-TYPE AMENDMENT TO THE STATE APPROPRIATIONS BILL WERE RAPIDLY LOSING SUPPORT BECAUSE OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL QUESTIONS INVOLVED AND THE HEAVY DEPARTMENT EFFORTS ON THE HILL(REFTEL).

3. TO COUNTER BYRD ET AL ON THURSDAY WE DEVELOPED TWO BLOCKING ACTIONS. FIRST, A TABLING MOTION SPONSORED BY HUMPHREY AND CRANSTON WHICH BY THE END OF THE DAY HAD CORNERED 62 COMMITTED VOTES; AND SECOND, SUBSTITUTE LANGUAGE OFFERED BY SENATOR PASTORE WHICH WOULD HAVE COMMANDED EVEN WIDER SUPPORT AND WITH WHICH WE COULD HAVE LIVED. HAMMERED OUT BY BUNKER AND PASTORE, IT STATED: "IT IS THE SENSE OF THE CONGRESS THAT ANY NEW PANAMA CANAL TREATY MUST PROTECT THE VITAL INTERESTS OF THE UNITED STATES IN THE OPERATION, MAINTENANCE, AND DEFENSE OF THE PANAMA CANAL."

4. ON NIGHT (10:30 P.M.) OF JULY 31ST, AFTER TURKEY BILL HAD PASSED SENATE BY 47-46, MAJORITY WHIP SUDDENLY ANNOUNCED THAT ALL FURTHER AMENDMENTS AND RESOLUTIONS HAD BEEN "ABROGATED." BYRD, THURMOND, AND TOWER HAD COUNTED NOSES AND DECIDED AGAINST OFFERING THEIR AMENDMENTS. BYRD LATER TOLD PASTORE THAT HE WOULD CONTINUE HIS EFFORTS TO TACK IN AMENDMENTS WHEN "THE STATE APPROPRIATION AND AUTHORIZATION BILLS COMES UPIN SEPTEMBER."

5. THE BYRD/SNYDER EXERCISE OF THE LAST FEW WEEKS HAS POINTED TO SOME PROMISING DEVELOPMENTS: (A) A GROWING AWARENESS IN THE SENATE OF THE IMPORTANCE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE TREATY NEGOTIATIONS; FOR THE FIRST TIME, MANY OFFICES ARE BEING EXPOSED TO THE "OTHER SIDE OF THE ISSUE;"

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(B) THE CREATION OF A WELL-ORGANIZED PRO-TREATY LOBBY (HEADED BY HUMPHREY, MCGEE AND CRANSTON) WHICH IS READY TO DO BATTLE WITH THE THURMOND/BYRD FORCES AT ANY GIVEN TIME; (C) SLOW BUT NOTICEABLE "CRACKS" IN SEVERAL OF THE THURMOND RESOLUTION SPONSORS IN THEIR PERCEPTIONS OF THE ENTIRE CANAL QUESTION; AND (D) THE STRONG COMMITMENT OF THE DEPARTMENT AS EVIDENCED BY THE HEAVY LOBBYING EFFORTS OF BUNKER, ROGERS, JORDEN AND MCCLOSKEY TO EDUCATE

THE CONGRESS ON THIS KEY FOREIGN POLICY ISSUE.

6. MINISTER BELL INFORMED PANAMANIAN AMBASSADOR GONZALEZ-REVILLA AT MIDNIGHT OF BYRD DECISION NOT TO PROCEED WITH ANTI-TREATY RESOLUTION. GONZALEZ WAS PLEASED AT OUTCOME AND EXPRESSED PANAMA'S UNDERSTANDING AND APPRECIATION FOR VIGOROUS ADMINISTRATION EFFORT TO COUNTER BYRD AND HIS ANTI-TREATY ALLIES IN CONGRESS. HE SAID PANAMA REGARDS

THIS EFFORT AS DEMONSTRATION OF US DESIRE TO CONTINUE TREATY NEGOTIATIONS. GONZALEZ PROMISED TO MAKE SAME OBSERVATION WHEN INFORMING TORRIJOS CONCERNING FAVORABLE OUTCOME OF CONGRESSIONAL STRUGGLE ON PANAMA ISSUE.

7. ASSISTANT SECRETARY ROGERS CONTACTED OAS SECRETARY GENERAL ORFILA EARLY MORNING OF AUGUST 1 TO BRIEF HIM REGARDING SIGNIFICANCE OF CONGRESSIONAL STRUGGLE ON PANAMA, PARTICULARLY INDICATIONS THAT OUR CAMPAIGN TO EDUCATE CONGRESS REGARDING TREATY NEGOTIATIONS IS BEGINNING TO SHOW POSITIVE RESULTS.

8. TO FOLLOW UP ON GONZALEZ'S REPORT TO TORRIJOS, AMBASSADOR BUNKER REQUESTS THAT YOU PERSONALLY CONVEY THE FOLLOWING MESSAGE FROM HIM TO MINISTER NEGOTIATOR TACK.

9. BEGIN QUOTE AUGUST 1, 1975
DEAR TONY:

I AM ASKING BILL JORDEN TO CONVEY TO YOU SEVERAL PERSONAL THOUGHTS I HAVE ON THE EVENTS OF THE LAST FEW DAYS IN THE SENATE AS THEY PERTAIN TO OUR NEGOTIATIONS.

AS A RESULT OF A MAJOR ADMINISTRATION EFFORT, INVOLVING
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THE PERSONAL INTERVENTION OF SEVERAL SENIOR DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS, INCLUDING BILL ROGERS, BILL JORDEN, AND MYSELF, WE HAVE WON TWO SIGNIFICANT SKIRMISHES WITH TREATY OPPONENTS IN THE SENATE. THE FIRST WAS OVER THE BYRD (SNYDER) AMENDMENT AND THE CONSTITUTIONAL IMPLICATIONS OF THIS ATTEMPT TO WITHHOLD FUNDS FOR THE NEGOTIATIONS. THE SECOND AND, PERHAPS, TOUGHER FIGHT BECAUSE IT INVOLVED THE QUESTION OF SOVEREIGNTY, WHICH MOST CONGRESSIONAL OPPONENTS HAVE ATTEMPTED TO MAKE THEIR KEY ISSUE, OCCURRED YESTERDAY. WITH ONLY SLIGHT WARNING BYRD AND HIS SUPPORTERS MADE PLANS TO INTRODUCE A SENSE OF THE CONGRESS' RESOLUTION ON JULY 31 TO THE EFFECT THAT "THE UNITED STATES SHOULD MAINTAIN ITS SOVEREIGNTY, RIGHTS AND JURISDICTION IN THE PANAMA CANAL AND ZONE." BUT THEY WERE FORCED TO BACK DOWN LATE LAST NIGHT WHEN IT BECAME OBVIOUS THAT THEY LACKED

SUFFICIENT SUPPORT.

WHILE WE EXPECT THAT TREATY OPPONENTS WILL CONTINUE THEIR ACTIVITY AFTER CONGRESS RECONVENES IN SEPTEMBER, WE ARE HOPEFUL THAT IT CAN BE CONTAINED AND ULTIMATELY DEFEATED. IN THIS REGARD, OUR INTENSIFIED EDUCATIONAL EFFORT DIRECTED TOWARD CONGRESS SEEMS TO BE HAVING POSITIVE RESULTS.

AS I TRUST YOU AND NICO APPRECIATE, WE ARE FIRMLY COMMITTED TO CONTINUING THE NEGOTIATIONS AND ARE DOING ALL IN OUR POWER TO DEVELOP CONGRESSIONAL UNDERSTANDING AND SUPPORT FOR A DRAFT TREATY IN ANTICIPATION OF SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF OUR NEGOTIATIONS.

I UNDERSTAND THAT MOREY SPOKE LAST NIGHT WITH NICO AND HOPE THAT YOU SHARE OUR GRATIFICATION OVER THESE EVENTS.

SIGNED ELLSWORTH BUNKER END QUOTE INGERSOLL UNQUOTE SISCO

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